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Florida Region

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Abbreviations: A.B.S. (*Archbold Biological Station*), C.P. (*County Park*), P.P.M. (*Polk County phosphate mines*), F.O.S.R.C. (*Florida Ornithological Society Records Committee*), S.R.A. (*State Recreation Area*), S.T.F. (*Sewage Treatment Facility*)

Loons to Waterfowl

A Red-throated Loon was seen off St. Marks N.W.R., *Wakulla*, Jan. 12 (D&S Jue), and two were there Feb. 2 (L. McCullagh); much rarer was an inland report of one at Bivins Arm, *Alachua*, Nov. 28–Dec. 3 (J. Hintermister). A Cory's Shearwater was carefully identified from shore at New Smyrna Beach, *Volusia*, Jan. 12 (J. Morlan). An ad. Masked Booby was off Playalinda Beach, *Brevard*, Jan. 30 (D. Freeman, M. Gurney). Widely scattered inland reports of Brown Pelicans continue. An amazing seven Am. Bitterns were found in the 2-acre marsh of the Brooker Cr. Preserve, *Pinellas*, Feb. 8 (A&RS, B. Hoffman). Least Bittern, rarely reported in n. Florida in winter, was seen at St. Marks N.W.R., Jan. 2 and Feb. 1 & 4 (J. Salvetti, R. K. Hagar, JC). Great Blue Herons began nest building Dec. 4 on Paynes Prairie, *Alachua* (RR). Cattle Egret seem to be wintering farther north: 96 at Springhill Road S.T.F., *Leon*, Dec. 12, and 20 flying over Tallahassee Dec. 20, where a few remained at least until Feb. 15 (GM).

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck was shot from a flock of four Jan. 25, and three were seen Feb. 5 at Bienville Plantation, *Hamilton* (A. Stoekle, *vide* J. Krummrich). Two Greater White-fronted Geese were at Merritt Island N.W.R., *Orange*, Jan. 4 (A&BH). Twelve Snow Geese were counted in *Leon* Jan. 13 & 24 (GM, JC). Three Snow Geese in w. *Duval* were accompanied by a Ross' Goose Dec. 23–Jan.

12 (I. Cornelius, † to F.O.S.R.C.). Another Ross' Goose was found dead at Merritt Island N.W.R., ca. Dec. 22 (*vide* D. Stucky). Gadwall peaked sharply at 730 at the P.P.M., Jan. 9 (PF). A ♂ Eur. Wigeon visited St. Marks N.W.R. Jan. 27 and Feb. 6 (K.&D. MacVicar, JC). On Dec. 12, 1100 Am. Wigeon and 72 Canvasbacks were at the P.P.M. (PF, MH). An imm. ♂ Com. Eider stayed at Convoy Pt. Jetty, Biscayne N.P., *Dade*, Jan. 15–25 (D. Pharo, ph. B. Dusek). A ♂ Harlequin reported off Alligator Pt., Jan. 10–15 (P. Burns, m.ob.) was photographed Jan. 11 (W. J. Bolte) and Jan 13 (JC). A White-winged Scoter was seen at Honeymoon Island S.R.A., *Pinellas*, Jan. 8 (A&BH).

Raptors to Gulls

Ten Ospreys reported on the Tallahassee CBC (GM) suggests they are wintering farther north. Two late Broad-winged Hawks were reported at P.P.M., Dec. 12 (PF, MH). A Short-tailed Hawk was over Saddle Creek C.P., *Polk*, Feb. 17 (L. Lane, M. Chakan).

Ten Purple Gallinules were wintering at L. Jessup Conservation Area, *Seminole*, Jan 18 (*vide* L. Malo). American Coot concentrations were estimated at 40,000 at P.P.M., Dec 12 (PF, MH) and 15,000 at L. Hatchineha, *Oseola*, Jan. 25 (T. Palmer).

A Long-billed Curlew wintered off Lanark, *Franklin*, Dec. 6–Feb. 26, and was joined in February by four Black-necked Stilts, rare in winter that far north (GS, H.





Rare as far south as Florida, this male Harlequin Duck was at Alligator Point, Franklin County, January 11, 1997. Photograph/W. J. Bolte.

Bolte, C. Gunnels). Another stilt was seen in *Duval* Dec. 28 (M. Dolan). These represent small numbers compared with the P.P.M.'s 84 Black-necked Stilts Jan. 9 (PF) and 172 Am. Avocets Dec. 12 (PF, MH). A Solitary Sandpiper, which should have been in South America, was found at Sawgrass Lake C.P., *Pinellas*, Dec. 21 (G. Stoccardo, ph. B. Pranty). A W. Sandpiper at Wekiwa Springs S.P. *Orange*, Feb. 8 represented a new park report there (*vide* P. Small), and three Long-billed Dowitchers in *Okeechobee* Feb. 9 (A&RS) provided a first for the county. Eight other Long-billeds were in *Duval* Dec. 1–29 (R. Clark). A flock of 32 Stilt Sandpipers was seen on Bienville Plantation Dec. 7 & 21 (RR).

A light-phase ad. Parasitic Jaeger was at Ponce Inlet Jan. 20 (A. Kratter, T. Taylor). A Lesser Black-backed Gull appeared at Convoy Pt. Jetty, Biscayne N.P., *Dade*, Jan. 18 (ph. B. Dusek). A Black-legged Kittiwake at Naples Dec. 26–Jan. 4 (G. Erbe, m.ob.) was photographed Jan. 1 (T. Below), establishing a first record for s.w. Florida. A wintering Gull-billed Tern reported at Pine Island C.P. provided a first for *Hernando*; six were at the P.P.M., Feb. 2 (PT, CG) and one at Merritt Island N.W.R., *Brevard*, Feb. 9 (A&RS).

Doves to Hummingbirds

A White-winged Dove was seen at St. Marks N.W.R. between Dec. 7 through 28 (T. Engstrom, m.ob.), nine were at Cedar Key Jan. 4 (C. Lanciani, G. Kiltie), and one was at Tierra Verde, *Pinellas*, Dec. 21 (L. Atherton), suggesting an influx from the west. The 65 at an Orlando roost Dec. 26–Feb. 6 (D. Freeman) and the 14

at Key West Jan. 22 (JO) may be Florida birds. A Short-eared Owl roosted on Lanark Reef, *Franklin*, Jan. 14–Feb. 13 (GS). Another Short-eared was on Shell Key, *Pinellas*, Feb. 24, and two were there Mar. 2 (P. Blair, W. Yusek). The parrot populations continue to build. There were 95 Black-hooded Parakeets in a tree in Gulfport, *Pinellas*, Dec. 21, where 5–20 were expected (A&RS, B. Hoffman), and the 25 Blue-crowned Parakeets seen in downtown St. Petersburg Jan. 10 formed a much larger flock than ever reported (B.&J. Gericke). Three *Chaerura* swifts were over Gainesville Jan. 12–29 (B. Roberts, RR) for the 5th winter, and two near Melrose which sounded like “Chimney Swifts, only higher” (L. Santisteban) furnished the first report of Vaux’s Swifts in *Putnam*.

SA At least 10 hummers were reported in *Leon* during the season. A *Selasphorus* hummingbird visited a feeder Sept. 24–Oct. 15 (B.&L. Short) and a ♂ Rufous was there Oct. 19–Dec. 24 (S. Jue, JC). Three other *Selasphorus* hummers remained in the area through February (*vide* GM). The first Black-chinned appeared Oct. 3–Dec. 29, another ♂ Black-chinned was identified Jan. 2 (M. Friedman, JC, N. Wamer), and three similar individuals were seen earlier (MF).
—Gail Menk

Another ♂ Rufous Hummingbird was in Lakeland through Dec. 20 (G.&G. Lucas, ph. L. Cooper), and a sedentary ♂ Rufous

was in Gainesville Sept. 26+ (B. Roberts). A well-documented 2nd-year ♂ Allen’s Hummingbird in Gainesville was banded Jan. 30 (B. Sargent, ph. in Gainesville *Sun* Jan. 31, † to F.O.S.R.C.). A Ruby-throated Hummingbird, perhaps more rare than Black-chinned in winter, came to a Jacksonville feeder Jan. 6–Feb. 17 (P. Powell).

Flycatchers to Warblers

A Brown-crested Flycatcher was found one mi s. of Melrose Dec. 31 (C. Lanciani), and another was calling w. of Delray Beach Jan. 1 (BH). A Sissor-tailed Flycatcher was photographed along SR-70, *DeSoto*, Dec. 28 (B. Pranty, E. Haney). A Vermillion Flycatcher wintered near Paynes Prairie Dec. 22–Feb. 9 (G. McDermont, m.ob.), and another one was in e. *Pasco* Jan. 5 (A&BH). The 14 Fish Crows wintering in Key West (JO) would not be news anywhere else in the state. Cedar Waxwings were abundant in *Leon*, the first report Nov 26 (GM), with numbers building through the period.

Northern Parulas were around the Big Bend this winter, one Jan. 1 in *Leon* (DE) and an early one in *Wakulla* Feb. 22 (F. James, D. Stedman). Was the one singing in Orlando Feb. 18 (D. Freeman) an early migrant or a wintering bird, like the female that came to a Key West hummingbird feeder through the season (JO)? Ovenbirds are routinely reported by careful observers in *Wakulla* in winter (R. Christen, J. Epler). A N. Waterthrush was attempting to winter relatively far north at Brooker Cr. Preserve, *Pinellas*, Dec. 15 (A&RS), and another was even farther north in Gainesville Dec. 20. A very early Hooded Warbler was reported in w. *Palm Beach* Feb. 8 (BH).

Tanagers to Finches

A W. Tanager was seen in *Broward* Dec. 15 & 22 (W. George, BH *et al.*) and another at Newnans L., *Alachua*, Dec. 22 (D. Cimbaro, I. Fromberg). A Dickcissel returned again this winter to a *Palm Beach* feeder (D. Brindle), and one was briefly at Paynes Prairie Dec. 22–28 (J. Hintermister). A Vesper Sparrow reported at Big Cypress National Preserve, *Collier*, Jan. 19 was s. of its usual wintering range. A Lark Sparrow was reported at Ft. DeSoto C.P., *Pinellas*, Dec. 31 (R. Smith), and two were n. of Auburndale, *Polk*, Feb. 9+ (PT, CG). One or more Nelson’s Sharp-tailed Sparrows wintered near the St. Marks Light-house Dec. 30–Feb. 4 (D. Morrow, JC), and five others were at Gulfport, *Pinellas*, at a site replanted with sea grasses and mangroves 2 years ago (A&RS, L. Atherton). Two Lapland Longspurs were reported at Smyrna Dunes C.P., *Volusia*, Dec. 4,

and a Snow Bunting at Merritt Island N.W.R., Jan. 4 (both A&RS). Four Bronzed Cowbirds were a first for the Ft. Myers CBC, possibly boding trouble. Two ♂ Baltimore Orioles were at Belle Glade Marina Feb. 24 (LA, M. Wilkinson), and there were ♂ Bullocks Orioles at Tampa Feb. 4 (L. Saul) and Key West Feb. 6 (JO). Reports specifying ad. males are gratifying since immatures and females of these species are difficult to separate on their wintering grounds. A House Finch in Winter Haven Feb. 7 (E. & K. Roberts) provided the 2nd *Polk* report for this species.

Addendum

A Leach's Storm-Petrel, found washed ashore but still alive on Clearwater Beach Oct. 8, 1996, died the next day (*G. Woolfenden, A.B.S.). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake, found injured near the Skyway Bridge, *Pinellas*, Jan. 14, 1996, died Feb. 7 (*G. Woolfenden, A.B.S.).

Corrections

In *Field Notes* Vol. 50, No. 3., the Black-legged Kittiwake (p. 271) was first found by R. and M. Sokol. The Warbling Vireo (p. 272) was later reidentified as a Philadelphia Vireo from its photograph and videotape.

In Vol. 50, No. 5. The Pin-tailed Whydah was seen on Boca Chica Key, Biscayne N.P., *Dade*.

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Ontario Region

RON RIDOUT

As might be expected in a region as large as Ontario, weather conditions across the province were diverse—as were trends of various birds. Temperatures across the south and central portions were above average in December, encouraging a few migrants to linger, though a cold snap in late November removed the possibility of most temporal rarities. While temperatures throughout the province were about normal after December, snow levels were extreme in many regions, with only the “deep” south escaping unscathed.

The season's owl invasion mirrored the previous winter's record movement, though on a slightly smaller scale. Numbers of Great Gray Owls were lower than 1995–1996, though still impressive. Surprisingly, Boreal Owl sightings more than doubled the previous winter's tally. With only a few scattered sightings across the south, winter finches remained largely in

the central and northern regions, and there only in average numbers. Evening Grosbeaks were virtually nonexistent, except for the northwest portions of the province.

Notable rarities were few and far between, with only a Yellow-billed Loon deserving mention here. All rarities mentioned in this report are subject to approval by the Ontario Bird Records Committee.

Abbreviations: Pelee (*Pt. Pelee N.P. and vicinity*); P.E.Pt. (*Prince Edward Pt., Prince Edward*). Algonquin, Presqu'ile and Rondeau are Provincial Parks. Place names in italics refer to counties, districts, or regional municipalities.

Loons to Waterfowl

An above-average 11 different Red-throated Loons were observed into December, mainly on the lower Great Lakes. The most northerly were at Kincardine Dec. 1 (PM,DF) and Ottawa Dec. 22 (TB). An imm. **Yellow-billed Loon**, the province's first in many years, lingered at Pt. Abino, *Niagara*, Jan. 2–7 (JL, m.ob.). A Pied-billed Grebe was exceptionally late at Cornwall Jan. 14 (BD), while one at Dundas lasted until Feb. 9 (RD, v.o.). Red-neckeds lingered late at Gore Bay Jan. 1 (TL) and Ottawa Dec. 28 (BD), while two lasted until Dec. 9 at Algonquin (RT). Sightings of an imm. N. Gannet

